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President: Mr. Barros Melet (Vice-President) ..... (Chile)

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In the absence of Mr. Shava (Zimbabwe), Mr. Barros Melet (Chile), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*) (A/72/61-E/2017/4)

Statement by the President of the General Assembly

1. **Mr. Thomson** (Fiji), President of the General Assembly, delivering the keynote address, said that the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development had provided humanity with a universal master plan to transform the world and secure a safe, sustainable and prosperous future for all. Since then, attention had shifted to the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

2. More than 700 million people remained in extreme poverty, conflict and humanitarian crises continued to bring untold human suffering and displacement, and the changing nature of modern warfare — including the rise of intrastate conflict and non-State actors, and terrorism, violent extremism and asymmetrical warfare — posed new threats to global security. New global challenges were also emerging, including from the effects of climate change, environmental degradation, accelerating urbanization and widening inequality. Meanwhile, societies were grappling with the social and economic impacts of new frontiers created by the rapid pace of technological advancement.

3. In a complex and rapidly-changing world, the international community must meet the challenges of implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was becoming clear that the Sustainable Development Goals would be achievable within 14 years only if new forms of thinking, partnership, financing, and delivery of results could be found. To meet the challenges, it was crucial to understand the nexus between peace, development, and humanitarian activities and to find ways to leverage the mutually-reinforcing opportunities which they provided.

4. The new concept of "sustaining peace" provided the United Nations with an opportunity to bring an integrated, coherent and coordinated approach to peace, sustainable development and humanitarian efforts. During the High-Level Dialogue on Building Sustainable Peace for All: Synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustaining Peace, held at United Nations Headquarters on 24 January, numerous speakers had emphasized that there could be no sustainable development without sustaining peace, and vice versa, and that both would require an integrated and interdisciplinary approach. With growing recognition of the fact that sustaining peace helped to create an enabling environment for long-term sustainable development, the current meeting represented a valuable opportunity to consider how to operationalize the new approach; how the United Nations system could enhance coordination between peace, humanitarian and development actors; and how it could leverage that approach to improve the delivery of its operational activities on the ground.

5. The United Nations system faced the task of finding complementary and coordinated approaches to delivering humanitarian assistance, supporting sustainable development and sustaining peace. And ways must be found to strengthen collaboration between key actors across all three pillars of the United Nations system, including throughout its organizational, governance and funding structures. He called on participants to rally to support the efforts of the Secretary-General to strengthen inter-agency coordination through a comprehensive, coordinated and coherent approach to the operational activities of the United Nations through the lens of conflict and prevention.

6. First, the entire United Nations system must scale up efforts to support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in a coherent, effective and efficient manner, while identifying and addressing any gaps. Second, it must ensure that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was implemented in a way that built synergies among development, humanitarian and peacebuilding actors, in line with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. Third, United Nations funds and programmes should continue to place the eradication of poverty at the centre of their work and to incorporate the perspective of sustaining peace, including at the country level. Fourth, the United Nations system should consider ways to strengthen leadership, accountability, strategic planning and coordination among actors at the country level, including by facilitating closer coordination between peacekeeping

missions, special political missions and United Nations country teams; hard-won development, peace and security gains must not be lost during transitions. Fifth, the United Nations should support nationally-led efforts to build inclusive partnership models that brought together partners working in humanitarian assistance, sustainable development and sustaining peace, including from all levels of Government, the United Nations system, civil society, international financial institutions, the private sector and grass-roots organizations. In all cases, active consideration should be given to ways in which to bring a longer-term, cross-sectoral and preventive perspective to policy decisions and programme deliveries.

7. The next 13 years would be the ultimate test of efforts to eradicate poverty, deliver universal peace and protect humanity's place on earth. That would require letting go of former mistrust and ways of operating; embracing innovative approaches aimed at building on the nexus between peace, humanitarian and sustainable development activities; and dedicating resources and will to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable development and sustaining peace were two agendas that stood or fell together and must both be pursued in an integrated manner.

Panel discussion: "From coordinated to integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda: the development, humanitarian and peacebuilding nexus"

8. **Ms. Salah** (former Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and former Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad), moderator, said that the United Nations would need to adapt if it was to stay relevant, effective and fit-for-purpose and meet the needs of the ultimate beneficiaries of development and peace. It was a propitious moment for change since the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General had both expressed their commitment to change; the transformative 2030 Agenda recognized the connection between justice, peace and development; Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) confirmed the indivisible connection between sustaining peace and sustainable development; discussions at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 had focused on transcending the humanitarian development divide; and General Assembly resolution 71/243 called on entities of the United Nations development system to build synergies and enhance coordination in humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts. She suggested that participants should explore what steps could be taken to operationalize resolution 71/243, how best to build synergies in the development sector and what opportunities existed to boost progress towards a One United Nations framework.

9. **Mr. Kubiš** (Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq), panellist, said that the Secretary-General had confirmed to him that he was committed to fast-tracking reform of the coordination system. The Secretary-General's vision incorporated fundamental paradigm shifts in how Member States, agencies, funds, programmes and the Secretariat would operate, including through greater emphasis on prevention over response, repositioning sustainable peace and inclusive development at the heart of the United Nations. Strengthening cross-pillar work to address the root causes of instability and meet the needs of individual countries, rather than pursuing a business-as-usual approach or supporting institutional ambitions or the agendas of donors, was another key aspect of that vision.

10. As head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), he expressed concern that the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review was not sufficiently ambitious. It promoted the idea of bridging the gaps between peace, development and humanitarian action anchored in human rights, thereby encouraging business as usual and quick fixes rather than entirely revamping the current institutions. He also questioned whether the measures to address the trust deficit at the United Nations and ensure that the work of the development system responded not just to agency mandates but to global goals and system-wide commitments were actually followed in reality. With regard to governance on system-wide issues that fell beyond the purview of individual governing bodies, he recommended enhancing the powers of the Secretary-General.

11. Changes to the development system should be considered at two levels: the United Nations development system as a whole, which had been considered in the panel discussion at the 10th meeting of the Economic and Social Council, and at the level of individual operations mandated by the Security Council. Since Security Council operations were often carried out during humanitarian emergencies or permanent states of crisis management, all parties and partners must understand the prerogatives of the highly political environment in which they operated rather than simply offering quick fixes. Security Council special missions were particularly complex because United Nations agencies, funds, programmes and the

Secretariat all operated in the same environment but under different rules and regulations.

12. In the case of Iraq, UNAMI was working with the United Nations country team, potentially in an environment free of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) but in which ISIL supporters might still engage in terrorist activities. His office was currently updating the integrated strategic framework and aligning the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) with the country's rehabilitation plans and national development agenda. The success of its efforts largely depended on the goodwill of the critical players and good chemistry between the special representative of the Secretary-General, the humanitarian coordinator, the resident coordinator and the resident representative. Nevertheless, whenever there were institutional barriers, considerable resources and energy were wasted on bridging the gaps between those entities.

13. The proposed reforms of the Secretary-General could be made more ambitious by: ensuring that special representatives of the Secretary-General, humanitarian coordinators, resident coordinators and resident representatives were appointed as full partners; establishing country task forces to bring partners together at the headquarters level to discuss material and political support for the implementation of UNDAFs; and, when a country had no Security Council special missions on the ground, making sure that country teams were headed by representatives accountable to the Secretary-General.

14. **Ms. Gasarabwe** (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and United Nations Resident Coordinator, Humanitarian Coordinator and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Mali), panellist, said that since the deployment of MINUSMA in Mali in 2013, the number of humanitarian agencies on the ground had increased significantly to support internally displaced persons, refugees and the local population. The Integrated Stabilization Mission was mandated to reinforce the linkages between humanitarian, development, peacebuilding and peacekeeping dimensions, but essentially found itself in a hybrid situation. Its 15,000 military, police and civilian staff were tasked, on the one hand, with protecting Mali from persistent political crises in the form of asymmetric and extremist threats and, on the other hand, with staving off continuing humanitarian crises linked to development failure. Mali was therefore a good illustration of the complexities that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was designed to address in its mandate under resolution 71/243: the need to build resilience to deliver the 2030 Agenda in the face of both a humanitarian crisis and a severely insecure environment.

15. Nevertheless, humanitarian operations in Mali ran the risk of becoming institutionalized if the country could not achieve the stability and social cohesion necessary to link short-term humanitarian interventions with long-term development needs. The persistent instability also undermined national capacities and diminished the Government's ability to implement sound national development policies. Endemic shortfalls in funding exacerbated the situation and led to increased competition between development and humanitarian agencies in the delivery of responses.

16. Her main responsibilities as deputy representative of the Secretary-General, resident coordinator, humanitarian coordinator and resident representative were to encourage United Nations actors to leverage the comparative advantages of the United Nations and to guide a smooth transition from short-term stabilization and early recovery to peacebuilding and long-term development. Although Mali had managed to develop UNDAF+ 2015-2019, a humanitarian response plan and a road map covering the political, military and civilian protection components of the work of MINUSMA, in addition to the country plans of the United Nations country team, the challenge was to integrate all the plans and programmes in such a way as to meet the needs of the population.

17. A shift from a coordinated to an integrated response would require, first and foremost, a profound change in mindset throughout the system. Those fulfilling the functions of the deputy representative of the Secretary-General, resident coordinator, humanitarian coordinator and resident representative would also require a well-trained and well-integrated front office. Currently, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations supported the deputy representative of the Secretary-General, the Development Operations Coordination Office supported the resident coordinator, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs supported the humanitarian coordinator and the resident representative functions were delegated to the country director, as per the firewall requirements. Although the four entities were co-located, each had different policies, standards, rules, procedures and funding systems. The follow-up to the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review therefore offered a good opportunity to improve the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the system in such contexts.

18. Unless the United Nations system and Member States provided clearer definitions of the areas of work and parameters between peace and security, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and development, integrated action and smooth coordination would be impossible. Further harmonization and integration of policies and procedures, shared back offices and better coordinated, more integrated funding mechanisms in the donor community would help to resolve matters. Similarly, the large number of humanitarian and development agencies using different standards was more conducive to competition than collaboration. She therefore advocated a One United Nations framework, on the basis of a system of authority rather than goodwill, with closer cooperation between humanitarian and development agencies and MINUSMA. Lastly, in areas which could have potential for efficiency gains and reduce transaction costs, she would also welcome a common set of business practices to apply to both United Nations country teams and special missions.

19. The people of Mali had high hopes that the United Nations could help them to combat the many challenges which they faced, including in the areas of human rights, sustainable development and peace. Although field offices could provide analysis and press the case for reform, ultimately any changes would require support from leadership at the United Nations headquarters and the United Nations entities present in Mali. She called on all United Nations entities, Member States, civil society, the private sector and human rights activists to work together to bring about the changes which the country sorely needed.

20. **Mr. Salam** (Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations), panellist, said that peacebuilding, development and humanitarian activities had been taking place simultaneously in his country over the previous few decades. The United Nations and the entities of its development system had been important partners in the efforts since the 1990s to reconstruct and heal Lebanon following its long internal civil conflict and Israeli invasions, while the humanitarian dimension had dominated the discourse since 2011 owing to the influx of refugees from Syria. His Government had consistently emphasized the need to enhance coordination and coherence between the development and humanitarian activities of United Nations entities and operations at the country level, in accordance with national plans and priorities, in order to meet the needs of both the refugees and their host communities. The peacebuilding activities and support of the United Nations system should also be continued.

21. A great deal of humanitarian aid was actually used for development purposes, especially in situations of protracted conflict; therefore those two types of aid needed to be addressed as one. The United Nations Strategic Framework 2017-2020 recognized that in view of the multidimensional challenges the country faced, and the multiple mandates under which the United Nations was operating in the country, a "whole-of-Lebanon" approach that leveraged expertise, capacities and resources was needed to support the Government in its work and in managing various challenges to stability. The Framework identified three core priorities: peace and security for all people in Lebanon, domestic stability and effective governance, and poverty reduction and sustainable development carried out so as to allow immediate needs to be simultaneously addressed in a manner that was sensitive to human rights and gender.

22. **Ms. Fladby** (Policy Director for United Nations Operational Activities, Department for United Nations and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway), panellist, said that a whole-of-system approach was not new, but that there appeared to be a knowledge gap between the comprehensive analyses of what had already been achieved at the country level and actual collaboration between missions and country teams. The 2016 report published by the Office of Internal Oversight Services entitled "Evaluation of the Integration Between Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Country Teams in Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo" had provided only limited insight. To address the gap, the Council should have evidence-based discussions on the role of the United Nations development system in various types of conflict-affected countries; the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review should deal with the issues in detail; and the Office of Internal Oversight Services report should be brought to the attention of the Council.

23. With regard to the roles and mandates of the different entities, she wished to know whether the current arrangements of collaboration among the various entities of the development system were working smoothly, particularly when missions and country teams were involved in the same type of activity, such as elections. Did those entities work towards not only short-term peacebuilding, but also long-term development with a view to improving core public administration functions and inclusive economic growth? She welcomed the enhanced engagement of the World Bank, and its closer collaboration with the United Nations, in fragile contexts. Collaboration

between the World Bank and other multilateral financial institutions was critical to long-term efforts, and should be institutionalized. There were good examples worth emulating, such as the United Nations Strategic Framework for Lebanon 2017-2020, in which the previous distinction between the terms "mission" and "country team" had been eliminated and all participants, including the World Bank, were presented as "members" of the country team. In order to move from coordination to integration across the three pillars of the United Nations, leadership and mutual accountability should be enhanced to ensure institutionalized collaboration; administrative policies and procedures should be harmonized between the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Group; the authority of the multi-hatted deputy special representative of the Secretary-General, resident coordinator and humanitarian coordinator should be increased; and fragmented funding patterns must be addressed.

24. **Mr. Zambrano** (Observer for Ecuador), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that when implementing the provisions of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution, the entities of the United Nations development system must respect the fact that coordination and synergies should be enhanced while respecting the different mandates and frameworks under which they were carried out. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review, after all, did not advance a model of "one country, one framework". The United Nations development system should always act in accordance with the national plans and priorities of countries facing humanitarian and conflict situations. Coordination between the areas of development and humanitarian action, and between development and peacebuilding, were treated separately in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. That distinction avoided the politicization of operational activities for development, in particular strategic plans and country programme documents, and of humanitarian assistance, where neutrality was critical. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review highlighted the importance of working towards long-term development gains, and acknowledged that development work could contribute to sustaining peace. However, development was not the only condition for peace, and the political responsibility for peace and security belonged to the Security Council, not the development system. Such complexities were better captured in paragraph 24 of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review than in paragraph 14, at which the Group of 77 and China had already expressed its strong concern. Paragraph 14 mixed all activities together without any reference to respect for national plans and priorities, international law, General Assembly resolution 46/182, and different mandates within the United Nations system. It also referred to a "comprehensive whole-of-system response", going far beyond the scope of operational activities for development, which was the very subject of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

25. **Mr. Shawesh** (Observer for the State of Palestine), responding to the comments made by Mr. Salam, said that so many young Syrian children were unable to attend school because of a lack of a sustainable political solution to the Syrian crisis. What would the solution be, and how would the international community ensure that those children were not left behind?

26. **Mr. Shearman** (United Kingdom) said that the international community should move away from its innate conservatism and seize the opportunity to make the United Nations more than the sum of its parts. For instance, the Security Council was currently tackling issues in the Lake Chad basin, including peace and security, the environment, development, humanitarian action and climate change, none of which could be addressed in isolation. Member States must therefore facilitate integration across the operational parts of the United Nations system. Noting that his delegation was the second-largest voluntary donor of development funding to the United Nations, he said that funding — which was often diverted to purposes other than those originally intended — should be used intelligently to address humanitarian crises and support development work.

27. **Ms. Ordoñez Fernández** (Colombia) said that the peace agreement reached in her country was comprehensive, since it included the transformation of rural areas of Colombia devastated by the conflict as well as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. It aimed to create employment and tackle issues such as gender equity and environmental sustainability. It was therefore closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, all of which promoted sustainable peace. Considerable coordination would be needed among the various entities of the United Nations development system; the resident coordinator must have the authority to perform that role while respecting country leadership and must be able to report on the work completed by the system as a whole.

28. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review in 2016 had been more ambitious, but it was only a first step towards the changes needed in the Organization. It

had, however, enabled the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General to present their vision for transforming the United Nations development system.

29. **Mr. Denys** (Belgium), responding to the comments made by Mr. Kubiš, said that he wished to know how the quadrennial comprehensive policy review could be made more ambitious.

30. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) asked what could be done to ensure that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was more ambitious in the future.

31. **Ms. Oliveira Sobota** (Brazil) said that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was a good starting point to address the frustrations and challenges of coordination between United Nations offices in New York and people working in the field. Though her delegation approved of breaking down silos and bureaucratic walls, there were reasons that institutional boundaries existed. The United Nations development system should not become politicized, and different aspects of development should be treated accordingly, though some experts had often erroneously merged issues such as conflict and violence and attempted to address them as one problem.

32. **Ms. Clifford** (Australia), referring to the remarks made by the President of the General Assembly, said that there needed to be thoughtful engagement in order for risks to be appropriately managed, and the strengths and weaknesses of each discipline should be recognized. Examples where that principle could be applied were the neutrality of humanitarian work, women in peace and security, gender mainstreaming and issues of financing. What types of opportunities in joint assessments, holistic needs assessments, and practice response and simulations could be taken to ensure that beneficiaries on the ground saw more seamless integration?

33. **Mr. Sanfey** (Ireland) said that joined-up needs assessment, situation risk and problem analyses, including the impact of climate change on humanitarian development work, should be explored. Joint planning and programming should be carried out on a multi-year basis within United Nations country teams in order to facilitate the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, and action should be taken to prevent humanitarian crises. Reporting should not only aggregate and evaluate the impact of discrete actions, but should also explain how different activities with different origins were coordinated, and not duplicated or even set in competition with one another. The nexus was not one-dimensional, and just as humanitarian efforts should enable an environment for long-term development, sustainable development activities should build resilience and reduce fragility. Financing modalities that could support flexible and predictable multi-year programming and quickly redirect development assistance to where it was most needed should be considered.

34. **Mr. Thomson** (Fiji), President of the General Assembly, responding to concerns voiced by the delegations, said that no one was questioning national sovereignty. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and deciding which aspects of the 2030 Agenda to emphasize, should be the responsibility of national Governments; the role of the United Nations was to support them in their work. Drawing on his personal experience with other parts of the United Nations system, he said that there was far too much branding of individual programmes, and that the United Nations needed to be seen as a single entity in the countries in which it operated.

35. **Mr. Salam** (Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations), addressing the question on education, said that half of all Syrian refugee children in Lebanon were not in school and that many public Lebanese schools operated in three shifts to accommodate refugees. As Lebanon could not deal with that issue on its own, more aid was needed from the international community. Palestinian children would face a similar situation if the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) did not receive funding. However, neither funding of UNRWA nor the building of more schools for Syrian refugee children would address the political root causes of Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The United Nations must do much more to solve the Syrian refugee crisis and the long-standing Arab-Israeli conflict.

36. **Ms. Gasarabwe** (Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and United Nations Resident Coordinator, Humanitarian Coordinator and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative, Mali), responding to the comments made by the representative of the United Kingdom, said that MINUSMA operated under a Security Council mandate, had a United Nations country team and coordinated with many agencies and institutions. The challenges of financing, small or large, could be addressed in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

37. **Mr. Kubiš** (Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq) said that rather than respond to the questions about paragraphs 14 and 24 of

resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review during the current meeting, he could prepare written responses that would be available as soon as possible. Although the resolution admittedly was not as ambitious as operational staff on the ground might hope, he was encouraged by the process. The international community should take a leap of faith to make good use of it, since maintaining the status quo was not a solution. Development could not be isolated and undertaken as a technocratic exercise to provide assistance in the form of a patchwork of measures through the various United Nations funds, agencies, programmes and missions. In fact, it would only perpetuate the lamentable situation where many countries were willing to accept assistance provided by the United Nations, but were simultaneously critical of its collective failures. The Secretary-General, who was a good practitioner and very knowledgeable about the issues, should be supported and empowered to address them. A mechanism should be created at the Headquarters level that would focus on coordinating appropriately for the different conditions in each country, a task that should not be left to UNDAFs, especially in cases where there were no special missions or peacekeeping activities. In the context of comprehensive and composite missions such as his own, the international community should strive from the beginning not to create silos and barriers, which would encumber the delivery of results.

38. **Ms. Fladby** (Policy Director for United Nations Operational Activities, Department for United Nations and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway) said that the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review had done away with the old, linear approach, thereby providing a good basis for a move toward integrated approaches. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review was not able to address the numerous shortcomings that had been mentioned during the panel because that would be beyond its mandate. Instead, the leadership of the Secretary-General was critical to addressing those shortcomings.

Panel discussion: "Integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda: the role of the United Nations development system in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries emerging from conflict"

39. **Mr. Montes** (Senior Advisor on Finance and Development of the South Centre, Geneva), moderator, said that the discussion should focus on how to restore livelihoods in countries with refugees and the role that should be played by the United Nations in that regard. He asked the panellists, who were country representatives, how they dealt with the unruly United Nations system, and to what extent officials in developing countries could determine how the United Nations development system operated in their countries.

40. **Mr. Mannan** (State Minister, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Bangladesh), panellist, said that the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution had been significant, as it had come at a time when the United Nations development system had been repositioning itself to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other ground-breaking development agendas. The 2030 Agenda had focused special attention on least developed countries, and its implementation was challenging for all, but especially for least developed countries.

41. For the first time, the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution had called on the United Nations development system to address the special challenges facing least developed countries and other countries in special situations. The resolution recognized that those countries needed assistance in implementing the international plans of action and the Sustainable Development Goals, and it emphasized that official development assistance (ODA) commitments must be fulfilled for least developed countries. As a number of countries were on the path to graduation from the least developed countries category, the resolution requested comprehensive and targeted support for graduating and already-graduated countries. Another important provision for least developed countries in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was that the resolution mandated the United Nations development system to provide support to newly established technology banks for least developed countries, which would help those countries overcome technology gaps.

42. Enhanced normative and operational support was required for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the international plan of action. Existing contributions for operational activities were inadequate, as United Nations development system expenditure had declined in 2015. Contributions needed to be scaled up for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and to achieve the graduation rate set out in the international plan of action; graduating countries would also need comprehensive support. The United Nations development system should also identify innovative ways to enhance cooperation with other countries, especially from the South, around the issues of health, education, climate change and the eradication of

poverty. The system should also support the least developed countries to enhance data, statistics and information platforms.

43. **Ms. Shaaban** (Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Planning, United Republic of Tanzania), panellist, said that her Government had made concerted efforts to integrate the 2030 Agenda into the country's medium-term development plan. Efforts had also been made to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into the formulation of those medium-term national development plans to guide development, growth and poverty reduction initiatives. A number of the Sustainable Development Goals were pertinent to the country's five-year development plan.

44. Effective implementation of the national development framework and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals required high-quality, disaggregated national data. Data on issues such as employment, poverty, environment, gender, natural resources and governance was limited, which could hinder analysis and monitoring of progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, especially at the local level. The United Nations development system was well positioned to assist least developed countries such as Tanzania to collect data and monitor progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

45. Because it was difficult to generate adequate domestic resources, external resources had been complementing the financing gap. Though external resources were decreasing, and sometimes becoming unreliable and unpredictable, they would nevertheless continue to play a catalytic role in the financing of Sustainable Development Goals. In Tanzania, the United Nations Resident Coordinator was a permanent co-Chair of the Development Partners Group and could rally the Group's support.

46. The United Nations system was the custodian of the Sustainable Development Goals, and as an impartial broker, was well positioned to advance the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations should deliver integrated strategic analysis, policy advice, and, where possible, programme support that drew on the wide range of expertise across the United Nations development system. The United Nations development system could promote South-South cooperation and economic growth. Tanzania had been participating in such cooperative relationships and, for example, had sent a team to Uganda to learn about land management and small farm technologies.

47. **Mr. Martínez Villalba** (Director for International Organizations, Ministry of External Relations of Paraguay), panellist, said that in order for the United Nations development system to increase its targeted support to countries in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/243, it must be flexible and strengthen coordination between its component entities at the national, regional and international levels. Lack of territorial access to the sea cut off landlocked developing countries from global markets, hindering their competitiveness and economic growth and limiting the ability of over 440 million people in 32 countries globally to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

48. The United Nations development system must increase synergies between the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national, regional and international levels. It was vital to maximize the system's potential in each country and avoid duplication in its work; the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resident coordinators had a significant role to play in that regard. Regional initiatives such as the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, and the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States would also have important contributions to make.

49. Paraguay had drawn up a National Development Plan 2030 to harmonize its own work on poverty eradication, social development, inclusive economic growth, equality of opportunities and environmental sustainability with international efforts towards the 2030 Agenda. Additionally, in 2016 the Government had established an Inter-institutional Coordination Committee for national implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. In February 2017, UNDP had agreed to support the Inter-institutional Coordination Committee by collaborating on the development of an information technology platform for follow-up to the Goals. The tool would enable more coherent follow-up by facilitating the collation of data that were currently held by various national entities.

50. Efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals should be based on national development policies, and the international community should be made aware of the rights, and disadvantages, of countries in specific situations. His Government would do its part to uphold the international commitment to leave no one behind and hoped to continue to share positive experiences with all stakeholders and benefit

from lessons learned with a view to effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

51. **Mr. Sareer** (Permanent Representative of Maldives to the United Nations), panellist, said that small island developing States were uniquely vulnerable to natural disasters, the effects of climate change and economic shocks, which hindered economic growth and sustainable development. The United Nations development system had always been a fundamental mechanism in the development of small island developing States, and given the new mandates set forth in the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations development system must address the special needs of small island developing States.

52. The 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review aligned fully with the development-related aspects of the 2030 Agenda. That aspect was important for small island developing States since a sustainable development blueprint, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), was fully integrated into the 2030 Agenda. The entities of the United Nations development system should take a coordinated and holistic approach in order to enhance quality and avoid duplication of efforts. There were many examples among small island developing States where collaborative efforts had been effective. In Maldives, the Low Emission Climate Resilient Development was an example of collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The United Nations must allow space to small island developing States to share and scale up their best practices, which would promote a better response to individual and collective challenges.

53. Entities of the United Nations development system should adjust to the priorities of States and might be called upon to assist with identifying priorities through the resident coordinator and the entities on the ground. When adopting their strategic plans, the entities of the United Nations development system should ensure that their sustainable development activities in small island developing States remained within the mandates of their respective organizations. They must also align their priorities with regional and national priorities as set by the Governments of those States, regional organizations and small island developing State partners. Synergies between the Samoa Pathway and those other processes would minimize reporting and monitoring burdens within small island developing States.

54. The delivery of services to accelerate the implementation process was a high priority for small island developing States. The system must be universal, but responses should nevertheless be tailored to the specific vulnerabilities of all countries; even within groups of countries, diverse priorities and needs must be determined by the countries themselves and agreed jointly with the United Nations development system. The United Nations development system was familiar with the multidimensionality of poverty and with the diverse challenges that affected groups of countries such as small island developing States. The United Nations development system must therefore improve coordination with international financial institutions regarding funding practices. Small island developing States were ineligible for most concessional financing, as eligibility was assessed according gross domestic product (GDP). Support should instead be based on need rather than income, and the unique economic and environmental vulnerability of small island developing States should be taken into account.

55. A key role of the United Nations development system was to act as an intermediary in partnerships with the private sector. The United Nations development system could help small island developing States by ensuring that guidelines and policies were in place to provide tangible, transparent outcomes and continuous monitoring. It was imperative for the United Nations development system to assist with data collection and disaggregation.

56. The role of the multi-country offices should be re-evaluated. As there was a possibility that some small island developing States might be left behind due to their remoteness, country-level representation must be preserved and in some cases increased. A cost-effective option might be to station one staff member in remote locations who could liaise with the rest of the United Nations system instead of sending lengthy and costly missions to those locations.

57. **Mr. Sanfey** (Ireland) said that the United Nations development system must become more responsive to the needs of States working towards the Sustainable Development Goals, which meant changing the way that all the entities in the system operated individually and collectively. It was important to focus first of all on those furthest behind; thus, the United Nations development system must enable national ownership of development and results-based implementation of the

2030 Agenda. While least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States were particularly vulnerable, they were also the countries in which the United Nations development system could have the greatest impact. The United Nations development system was uniquely placed to guide States in formulating coherent approaches to 2030 Agenda implementation across national departments.

58. Ireland welcomed the request in General Assembly resolution 71/243 for the Secretary-General to conduct a biennial survey on the quality, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the support of the United Nations development system for national development priorities and plans, and looked forward to discussing the results in due course. Ireland also welcomed the reflection in the resolution that core funding was the bedrock of United Nations operational activities for development. His delegation would be interested in hearing the panel's views on possible areas to be included in a biennial survey, which would improve support to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

59. **Mr. Zambrano** (Observer for Ecuador), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that diversity was an important feature of developing countries. The United Nations development system had a role to play in supporting efforts to overcome development challenges in a flexible and tailored manner. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review called upon the United Nations development system to address special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries, including African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. It identified a need for special attention to countries in conflict and post-conflict situations and countries and peoples under foreign occupation, as well as to the specific challenges facing middle-income countries.

60. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review therefore urged the United Nations development system to continue to enhance its support for the implementation of relevant programmes of action. Finally, the Group would like to recall that the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and country programmes should be elaborated in line with each country's individual needs and priorities.

61. **Mr. Islam** (Observer for Bangladesh) said that it was broadly understood that least developed countries would need extraordinary support from the United Nations development system. Hopes had been high following the adoption of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 and the 2030 Agenda, but resource mobilization had not been forthcoming to date and overall funding had in fact fallen by 6 per cent.

62. Bangladesh welcomed the decision of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Programme to allocate at least 60 per cent of regular resources to least developed countries. His delegation wished to request that the Secretary-General took into account the needs of least developed countries in the mapping exercise on the capacities and gaps of the United Nations development system to be conducted in June.

63. **Mr. Shawesh** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that countries and peoples living under foreign occupation had been recognized as particularly vulnerable in paragraph 35 of the 2030 Agenda and in paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, as well as in many other United Nations documents and resolutions. However, the issues confronting countries and peoples under foreign occupation had not been specifically addressed during the segment. He believed that to be an oversight and hoped that it could be avoided in future documents.

64. Peace and security were indivisible and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was a particularly important and unique case. Data from the World Bank had shown that there was a sharp disparity between the minimum wage in Palestine and in Israel, while per capita gross national income was 11 times lower in Palestine than in Israel. That economic gap was not a formula for long-term, sustainable peace. He wondered whether the time had come to agree on a special and unique path to development for countries and peoples under foreign occupation.

65. **Mr. Denys** (Belgium) said that his delegation was very pleased that special attention had been paid to least developed countries in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. Over 50 per cent of his country's official development assistance went to such countries.

66. Tanzania was a pilot country for the delivering as one approach and the United Nations development system was required to maximize that approach. He asked whether Ms. Shaaban could give her views on "Delivering as one" in Tanzania and on what could be done better in her country and in others.

67. **Ms. Shaaban** (Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Planning, United Republic of

Tanzania) said that least developed countries should be a priority for the United Nations development system owing to their lack of resources and the challenges they faced in achieving some of the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations development system should support implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and the New Partnership for Africa's Development in order to ensure their integration with the 2030 Agenda.

68. With regard to the "Delivering as one" pilot in Tanzania, her country now had one programme, one leader, one team, one budgetary framework and one voice, and was endeavouring to establish common premises. The programme had a joint steering committee and was being implemented on the basis of country priorities and government ownership and leadership. However, some agencies were running separate programmes within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

69. **Ms. Clifford** (Australia) said that the discussion had highlighted the intersection between the Sustainable Development Goals and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. In light of the fact that greater financial flows to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States had been facilitated by the Green Climate Fund and the United Nations Development Programme, she wondered whether the panellists could comment on other opportunities for increasing financial flows.

70. **Mr. Martínez Villalba** (Director for International Organizations, Ministry of External Relations of Paraguay) said that it was important to treat all groups of countries in special situations equitably, rather than giving some groups more attention than others. In addition, they must all be included in any discussions or action taken, since inclusion was a key principle of the 2030 Agenda.

71. Financing was critical, particularly in the context of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Countries in special situations should be empowered. International organizations should focus on finding the most efficient way to fund projects in those countries that would mitigate their disadvantages.

72. **Ms. Shaaban** (Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Planning, United Republic of Tanzania) said that the implementation of her country's five-year development plan would require considerable resources. The Green Climate Fund had been identified as a key source of financing, since Tanzania was affected by climate change. Her Government was setting up a national climate finance fund and was struggling with accreditation.

73. **Mr. Mannan** (State Minister, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Bangladesh) said that his country had been running its own programmes in parallel to the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals. It was drawing on the lessons learned during the Millennium Development Goal phase, one of which was the importance of financing and technology to development. Financing levels had declined in the past but financing the least developed countries was a key aspect of leaving no one behind. Country ownership was vital, as development would still be necessary without the Sustainable Development Goals. Through the adoption of its Vision 2021 and Vision 2041, Bangladesh was pursuing the same goals with its own limited resources.

74. A biennial survey could cover country-specific needs, country ownership, resource mobilization and use of United Nations development system experience. Bangladesh would be interested in cooperating with all such efforts in the future.

75. **Mr. Sareer** (Permanent Representative of Maldives to the United Nations) said that the coherence of the system as a whole was the most important aspect of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review process, in particular for small island developing States, which had limited capacity to work with each agency separately.

76. A biennial survey would help to identify gaps and gauge how well the United Nations development system was responding to country needs. It could also be designed in such a way as to identify country priorities and determine whether they were being reflected in the work of the United Nations development system.

77. Regarding development funds, the main issue for small island developing States was access. The Green Climate Fund provided financing through regional bodies but small island developing States simply did not have the capacity to establish the necessary mechanisms. Greater flexibility was needed in order to provide them with access.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.